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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, CIA Data Processing Committee

SUBJECT : Support Philosophy of Computer Services

1. As you know, the Deputy Director for Support has been among the proponents of the philosophy that the requirements of the Agency for electronic data processing capability can best be served by a centralized organizational structure. We continue to believe that this is a valid principle although agreeing that the term "centralization" may need some clarification.
2. We look to the Office of Computer Services to provide a centralized computer support service for the Agency in much the same way that the Support components themselves function. The Office of Communications probably offers the most closely related analogy because it, too, is a technical component employing technical equipment and personnel. To follow the analogy through, when the Clandestine Services create a new station or base with perhaps only two or three people, the Office of Communications will undertake to train one of them in a relatively unsophisticated system of communicating. When the station grows and its responsibility expands, the communications capability will be increased proportionately by furnishing more elaborate communications equipment and qualified technical personnel to operate it. In keeping with this philosophy, we would look to the Office of Computer Services to furnish support to satisfy our EDP requirements following the same general pattern. In the event that we might have a requirement, for example, which can best be satisfied by having one or more of our people trained in EDP techniques, we would expect to proceed in that manner. As the requirement expands or as we create requirements of more significant magnitude, we would look to the Office of Computer Services to furnish us with the proportionate technical expertise.
3. Electronic data processing equipment, equipment operators, and programming personnel fit quite conveniently and clearly within the concept just described. When system analysts and system designers are added, however, the concept tends to be less clearly understood. If we consider the overseas station to be a "system," however, the same analogy can be reasonably applied. In this context the "system" is composed of all of the operational and management

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functions for which the Chief of Station has responsibility. In the analysis of his "system," he must so define his operational and management requirements that the type of support to be furnished can be readily determined. His need to solicit staff assistance and technical advice from the Office of Communications or other affected Support components in arriving at a definition of the station's Support problem and requirements will bear a direct relationship to the volume of business projected for the station and the relative complexity of its management structure. Based upon the Station Chief's definition of the requirements of his system, the Director of Communications will "design" a communications system and furnish equipment of an appropriate level of sophistication and personnel to operate it in sufficient numbers to maintain the hourly and daily coverage needed. In the same way, management throughout the Agency develops its own systems and identifies the communications requirements to support those systems. The Office of Communications designs the communications systems to satisfy those requirements and furnishes equipment and personnel to operate it as necessary. We believe the analogy can be made to apply to EDP support for the Agency and that management throughout the Agency should develop its own information and data processing systems and identify the requirements for electronic data processing support. The Office of Computer Services then should design computer systems to satisfy those requirements and furnish equipment and personnel to operate it in whatever environment is appropriate.

4. Carrying this one step further, positions throughout the Agency requiring a data processing competence could be identified and a new data processing career service could be created. The personnel involved could be given the option of retaining their present career service designation or converting to the new one.



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Special Assistant to the  
Deputy Director for Support

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